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Viewing cable 09QUITO1009, UNASUR Establishes Confidence Building Mechanism

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Every cable message consists of three parts:

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09QUITO1009	2009-12-01 22:43	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Quito

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.eluniverso.com/2011/04/09/1/1355/cable-237491.html>

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #1009/01 3352243
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O R 012243Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0487
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0128
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 001009

SIPDIS
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PASS TO AMCONSUL RECIFE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/12/01
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [AORC](#) [EC](#) [CO](#) [XM](#) [XR](#)
SUBJECT: UNASUR Establishes Confidence Building Mechanism

REF: QUITO 983; QUITO 97...

id: 237491
date: 12/1/2009 22:43
refid: 09QUITO1009
origin: Embassy Quito
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination: 09QUITO979|09QUITO983
header:
VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #1009/01 3352243
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O R 012243Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0487
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0128
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
RUEHWP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 001009

SIPDIS
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PASS TO AMCONSUL RECIFE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/12/01
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [AORC](#) [EC](#) [CO](#) [XM](#) [XR](#)
SUBJECT: UNASUR Establishes Confidence Building Mechanism

REF: QUITO 983; QUITO 979

CLASSIFIED BY: Heather M. Hodges, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The November 27 UNASUR meeting of foreign and defense ministers managed to reach agreement on a resolution establishing a "confidence building mechanism," with provisions designed to improve transparency and information sharing, provide guarantees regarding the use and/or threat of force, and define South America as a region of peace. UNASUR deferred discussion of the U.S.-Colombia Defense Cooperation Agreement until the next ministerial, and decided to invite the USG to discuss strategic issues and U.S. policy in the region with UNASUR. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) The foreign and defense ministers of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), meeting on November 27 in Quito, approved a resolution creating a "Mechanism to Build Confidence and Security." The agreement builds on the Bariloche Decision by UNASUR heads of state on August 28 to "strengthen South America as a zone of peace." In a November 28 MFA press release, Foreign Minister Fander Falconi called the agreement a "transcendental milestone for UNASUR, that constitutes the basis of a new relationship in the field of security for the countries of the region."

No Official Condemnation of the U.S-Colombia DCA

13. (C) The meeting deferred a Venezuelan proposal to declare the South American region a zone free of foreign bases until the next ministerial, still to be scheduled. The Ecuadorian press reported that the absence of Colombia's foreign and defense ministers at the November 27 also stymied the Venezuelan call for condemnation of the U.S.-Colombia Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), also deferred until the next meeting. The press referred to the lack of a condemnation in the agreement as a "win in this round by Colombia over Venezuela."

14. (C) Coordinating Security Minister Miguel Carvajal sought to put a positive spin on the outcome. In a televised interview on November 30, Carvajal said that the U.S. and Colombian commitment to ensure that the interests of UNASUR members would not be affected by the presence of USG personnel on Colombian bases was affirmed by a document from Colombia, as well as a letter by Secretary Clinton. Carvajal claimed that the United States "changed the text (of the DCA) in the last period" to provide such guarantees, and called this a "positive gesture."

15. (C) UNASUR has not given up on its goal to dialogue directly with the USG on the DCA. The UNASUR resolution states that "UNASUR considers it important to invite the United States to a dialogue on strategic questions, of defense, peace, security and development, in a date to be coordinated by the (UNASUR) Presidency." The Embassy has not received any communication from the MFA regarding such an invitation. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro and others reportedly suggested that UNASUR invite the Secretary.

Confidence Building Mechanism

16. (SBU) At the conclusion of an 11 hour session, the UNASUR members approved a resolution establishing a five-section confidence building mechanism to improve transparency and information sharing, provide guarantees regarding the use and/or threat of force, and define South America as a region of peace.

-- The first section, Exchange of Information and Transparency, creates a system for sharing information regarding defense policies, and requires member countries to share the text of all defense and/or security cooperation agreements as well as the defense budgets for the last five years.

-- The second section, Intra- and Extra-Regional Military Activities, requires member countries to notify in advance all members of UNASUR of any defense maneuver along the border of another country, to include details of that activity.

-- The third section, Security Measures, requires that member countries adopt needed measures to prevent and impede the presence or actions by illegal armed groups and to abstain from any type of assistance to these armed groups or its members.

-- The fourth section, Guarantees, provides that the use or threat of force by any UNASUR member country against another will be prohibited, including any type of military aggression or threat to stability, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

-- The fifth section, Completion and Verification, allows for visits and increased military cooperation in the region and for the verification of border situations of member states and to raise the resulting studies to UNASUR's Council of State Leaders.

Other Regional Issues

17. (C) Regarding the elections in Honduras, President Correa announced from Brussels on November 27 that "the decision is made: we will not recognize the elections under the de facto government

of Roberto Micheletti." He portrayed this as a UNASUR decision. Correa encouraged the European Union to follow UNASUR's lead, saying the elections "would be like a coup d'etat." However, Peruvian Foreign Minister Jose Garcia Belaunde undercut Correa by announcing separately in Quito on November 27 that Peru would recognize the elections. Ecuador's MFA issued a press bulletin on November 29 reiterating its position that the Honduran elections were "corrupt from the outset." (Ref A)

¶8. (SBU) Ecuador had suggested that the UNASUR meeting agenda include a discussion of the alleged spying by Chile against Peru. However, Chile succeeded in its request to have the issue removed from the agenda, according to press reports.

Low Level Attendance

¶9. (C) Few ministers were present at the November 27 meeting. Among 23 total participants, only two countries sent both their foreign and defense ministers, namely Ecuador and Brazil. Peru and Venezuela sent their foreign ministers, while Paraguay and Suriname sent their defense ministers. The remaining five UNASUR countries were represented by vice ministers or other officials.

Comment

¶10. (C) This UNASUR meeting was a milestone in that its divided membership managed to reach consensus on a document spelling out confidence building measures. The Secretary and Defense Secretary's letters clearly helped defuse criticism of the DCA.
HODGES

=====CABLE ENDS=====